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# DV News

**SUMMER 2005**  
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## Inside:

Widener Domestic  
Violence  
Symposium  
page 2

New DVCC  
Brochures and  
Training Schedule  
page 3

Victims' Tribute  
page 4

DVCC Training  
Update  
page 5

Subcommittee  
Reports  
page 6

VAWA Highlights  
page 7

## **The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Quarterly Newsletter**



Lt. Governor  
John Carney

### **FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER RESOLUTION**

Lieutenant Governor John Carney, Chair of the Delaware Criminal Justice Council, is heading up a Family Justice Center Task Force that will explore the feasibility of opening such a center in Delaware.

The concept of Family Justice Centers is one that has been slowly developing in a number of communities across the nation over the past decade. These centers allow for the co-location of services for victims of domestic violence in one facility. A victim would be able to receive counseling, visit with clergy, procure services for the children in the family, learn how to file charges or a protection order, receive legal assistance, and visit with a whole host of other government and non-profit providers, thereby making the journey back from violence a little bit simpler and less confusing.

A model Family Justice Center is the one in San Diego, California, which opened in late 2002. To learn more about the center in San Diego, visit their website at [www.familyjusticecenter.org](http://www.familyjusticecenter.org).

Delaware's Task Force, established by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 7, is charged with:

- Analyzing the feasibility of establishing a Family Justice Center in Delaware
- Defining the parameters of those victims eligible to be served in the Center
- Identifying services critical for inclusion at the Center
- Identifying a location for the establishment of the Center
- Providing cost projections and an action plan to implement a Family Justice Center

There are nearly 30 members on the Task Force, representing the Department of Justice, the courts, the Legislature, the City of Wilmington, police agencies and their victim units, the Children's Department, the Budget Office, the Division of Social Services, the Department of Correction, the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Child Inc., the Urban League, the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, Legal Aid, the Latin American Community Center, the Victims' Rights Task Force, the Abuse Intervention Committee, and the Child Protection Accountability Commission.

The Task Force will submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly by the end of October. More information on the Task Force and a copy of the Power Point presented at the first meeting can be found on the DVCC website at [www.dvcc.state.de.us](http://www.dvcc.state.de.us).

## Widener University School of Law Domestic Violence Symposium

By: The Hon. Robert B. Coonin



*Judge Coonin  
Family Court*

Domestic violence is a pervasive problem that affects all segments of our society. It is critical that we recognize the vulnerability and sense of hopelessness plaguing many victims.

The entire justice system, both criminal and civil, and those who work within it must guarantee that the victims of domestic

violence must never feel that the courthouse door is closed to them. Leaving an abusive relationship can have serious consequences for the victim. In response to the victim's efforts to leave, many abusers will escalate the violence perhaps to lethal levels, as they seek to reassert control over the relationship. When seen in this light, a victim's seemingly "crazy" decision to remain with the abuser makes sense as a survival tactic. Therefore, when faced with a victim who refuses to heed admonitions to leave the abusive relationship, neither the Court nor any advocate should ever threaten a victim that their failure to follow advice may lead to the denial of assistance in the future. The victim should never be made to feel that they have lost all options. When they do, we will have taken away their last hope of refuge, and closed the courthouse door to them. We will have been guilty of re-victimizing the victim.

This was the theme presented at the April 1st Domestic Violence Symposium presented by the Widener University School of Law and its Women's Law Caucus entitled "Battered Again? Re-victimizing Victims of Domestic Violence."

Throughout the day long symposium, some 150 participants were exposed to presentations, a mock trial and panel discussions on issues ranging from balancing punishment with protection of the child, failure to protect the child from abusive co-parents, the law of self-defense and duress in criminal cases to ethical dilemmas facing the legal practitioner, and

recognition of domestic violence within the gay/lesbian and immigrant communities.

In order to effectively address the impact of domestic violence in a given relationship and provide services for the protection of those threatened, an understanding must be gained of how the victim feels about her personal situation, the likelihood of coming into contact with the perpetrator; and whether the individual feels they are in immediate physical danger. A proper risk assessment must be undertaken to determine the actual extent of danger to the victim and options presented regarding community resources and legal services available for their protection. Serious consideration must be given to whether there has been a pattern of increasing violence, threats of suicide or homicide, evidence of substance abuse or serious mental health problems. These are among the many factors that should be considered.

In short, while we are developing an understanding of the nature of domestic violence and recognition of both its symptoms and its effect on our society as a whole, our ability to address the societal problem mandates that those who are subject to this abuse come to believe that there are options available to them for their protection. For this to happen, the legal system must both provide genuine option for the safety of the victim and never allow any victim to believe that the legal system has turned its back on them. To do otherwise is to make them a victim a second time.

### **Batterers' Intervention Program Certification Panel**

Staff: Bridget V. Poulle

- The Certification Renewal process is underway. Four of the five certified Domestic Violence Intervention Programs are in line for Certification Renewal.
- The Panel has completed certification renewal for two of the programs and is working on the third application.

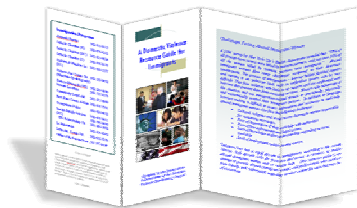
## Domestic Violence Brochures

## Training Schedule



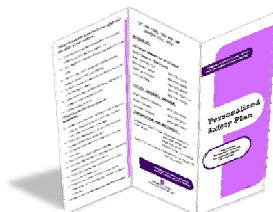
### Children and Domestic Violence Brochure

A brochure was developed by the DVCC Treatment Subcommittee in 2005 and lists effects domestic violence may have on children and contact resources for children who observe violence. Located under **Children and DV** on the DVCC website navigation bar.



### Immigration Resource Brochure

A comprehensive list of services for immigrant victims of domestic violence. Developed by the DVCC Immigration Subcommittee and presently available in English. Located on the DVCC website under **Immigration** on the navigation bar.



### DVCC Safety Plan

Safety planning brochure developed by DVCC and the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Laminated resource cards with hotline numbers are also available.

August 1, 2005

### 12 Event Program to Wellness

Henrietta Johnson Medical Center  
Wilmington, Delaware

August 9 and 21, 2005

### Domestic Violence Training for Healthcare Workers

Governor Bacon Health Center  
Delaware City, Delaware

September 11, 2005

### Wilmington Wellness Day

Rodney Square  
Wilmington, Delaware

September 26 and 27, 2005

### Criminal Justice Council's Crime Victim Services Conference

University of Delaware, Clayton Hall

October 2005

### Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October 16-22

### Week Without Violence

YWCA  
Wilmington, Delaware

October 21, 2005

### Family Wellness Conference

Polytech Conference Center  
Woodside, Delaware

**Request DVCC brochures from:**

**Kenzel Messick**

**Phone: 302-255-0405**

**Email: [Kenzel.Messick@state.de.us](mailto:Kenzel.Messick@state.de.us)**

**Website: [www.dvcc.state.de.us](http://www.dvcc.state.de.us)**

## Victims' Tribute

*By: Diane Glenn (Dover Police Department), Deborah Reed (Delaware State Police)  
Ronald T. Keen (Domestic Violence Coordinating Council)*



**Delaware Attorney General, M. Jane Brady**

In recognition of the 25th Anniversary of National Crime Victims Rights Week, the Delaware Victims' Rights Task Force sponsored the 14th Annual Proclamation Signing Ceremony in Wilmington and the Annual Victims' Rights Tribute in Dover, Delaware. On April 11, 2005, Lt. Governor John

Carney signed a proclamation declaring the week of April 10th – April 16th Victims' Rights Week in Delaware. The event was followed with award presentations to crime victims advocates for their hard work and dedication in the field of victim services. The awards were presented to: Kim Book for Outstanding Professional; Wilmington Police Department-Victim Services Unit for Outstanding Agency; Dolley Banks and Kiley Purcell for Outstanding Volunteers with Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

On April 13 at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover, Delaware, the Victims' Rights Task Force held the Annual Victims' Tribute. Over 100 people were in attendance at the event which featured Connie Logan, a mother whose son was killed as a result of a drunk driving crash. Delaware's Attorney General M. Jane Brady, along with Kiley Purcell a survivor, also spoke at the tribute. The Delaware State Police Pipes and Drums, the Dover Police Department Honor Guard, law enforcement officers from across our State and the Holy Cross Life Teen Choir were also on hand for the event.

Exhibits were on display from various agencies and groups which included: memorial walls which include letters, poems, and artwork submitted as personal remembrances for those victims who have survived, for those who have died and for those who continue to struggle daily to

recover from the aftermath of their victimization. Other displays included: The Wreath of Hope, The Silent Witness Display, The Bullying Project Quilt, and a T-Shirt artwork display from sexual assault survivors.

The Victims' Tribute offers the public an opportunity to become involved and aware of crime victims' rights, issues and advocacy assistance available throughout our State. Memorial submissions can be submitted during the year and should be addressed to: Diane Glenn, c/o Dover Police Department, 400 S. Queen Street, Dover, Delaware 19904.



## Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT)

Co Chairs; Cynthia M. Boehmer and Vincent J. Poppiti, Esq.

- Work is now underway on the 2005 FIRT Report, which will include data from ten new cases. Responses to the 2004 Recommendations of the fatal incident review will be included in the upcoming report.

The Fatal Incident Review Team Statute, 13 Del. C. § 2105, requires that any case involving the death of a minor child related to domestic violence be reviewed jointly by the appropriate panel of the Child Death Review Commission and the Fatal Incident Review Team. FIRT staff is working with the Child Death, Near Death and Stillbirth Commission to coordinate the joint reviews. The 2004 FIRT report is available on the DVCC website at [www.dvcc.state.de.us](http://www.dvcc.state.de.us)



## DVCC TRAINING UPDATE

*By: Eileen F. Ondra*

### Dating Violence - Local High School Health Fairs

The DVCC and Child, Inc. partnered to attend two health fairs at Del Castle High and Springer Middle School on April 29 and May 25, 2005. Approximately 1,000 students received information on healthy relationships, dating violence, and safety planning. Brochures and handouts included: the Power and Control Wheel in Dating, "How to Help A Friend Who Is Abused," the DVCC Safety Plan and resource cards, and a brochure from the Delaware Office of Prevention on Dating Violence.

Approximately 100 students from Springer Middle School completed a survey on violence, which will be used to assess the need for additional education on the topic.

### Dispatcher Training

Training was delivered to 21 Delaware telecommunications professionals on June 22, 2005. Dee Dee Wilson, national trainer and dispatch manager, from Eureka, California, spoke concerning speaking with victims, children, and suspects on domestic calls. The training was videotaped for future training for dispatchers.



### Law Enforcement Training - February 2005

The DVCC, in coordination with the National Training Project, Duluth, Minnesota, delivered law enforcement training February 15 and 16, 2005, to approximately 160 law enforcement officers statewide on the topic of "Identifying the Predominant Aggressor" and "Interviewing Suspects, Victims, and Children."

Scott Jenkins and Marcus Bruning, speakers from The National Training Project, conducted plenary sessions throughout the two days at two different sites - Polytech Conference Center in Woodside, Delaware, on February 15, 2005, and Embassy Suites in Newark, Delaware, on February 16, 2005. The National Training Project provided student guides and collaborated with the DVCC to customize the training specific to Delaware legislation, domestic violence policies and protocols. The training was well received by attendees.

### Matrix Training – May 2005

On May 18 and 19, 2005, training was delivered to 35 Domestic Violence Probation Officers and their Superiors at the new conference center, The Outlook at the Duncan Center, in Dover, Delaware. Jen Wright, from the National Training Project in Duluth, Minnesota, delivered training on the matrix, which is a risk assessment instrument used by probation and parole officers in Duluth, Minnesota, and several other states. Probation and parole officers will use the matrix to assess risk in domestic cases, in place of the current LSI-R instrument.

The two-day training was well received by the participants and the National Training Project will be available for technical assistance as the instrument is implemented in Summer/Fall 2005.



From Left to Right: Delaware Probation and Parole Managers: Karen Keough, Cathy Taylor, Jen Wright (Speaker, National Training Project), and Melissa Kearney

## DVCC SUBCOMMITTEE SUMMARIES

### Children and Domestic Violence

Co-Chairs: Representative Deborah Hudson and Secretary of Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, Cari DeSantis

- The Subcommittee highlighted the Domestic Violence Advocate Project at the 5/19/05 Quarterly Meeting.
- Members are developing a grant application to provide crisis intervention services to children who witness domestic violence related homicide, suicide, or felony level assault involving family members.

### Corrections and Treatment

Co-Chairs: Commissioner Stan Taylor and Honorable Lawrence M. Sullivan

- Probation and Parole limits 24-hour pager program to police call-ins after new domestic violence arrests. Police officers are no longer able to call in on new sexual offenses due to VAWA grant requirements and DOC internal practices.
- Probation and Parole hires Victim Services Agent for Kent County with VAWA funds.
- Probation and Parole and DVCC provide training for Probation Officers with VAWA funds.
- DOC in collaboration with treatment providers continues to consider developing a domestic violence intervention program for inmates while they are incarcerated.
- Treatment Subcommittee completed the brochure on how domestic violence affects children. Two thousand five hundred copies were printed. It is to be distributed to police officers, victim services providers, prosecutors, DFS staff, child witness guardians, the Office of the Child Advocate, and the Children's Advocacy Center.

### Courts

Co-Chairs: Chief Judge Chandlee Johnson Kuhn and President Judge James Vaughn, Jr.

- Family Court continues to work toward developing a Domestic Violence Court.
- Subcommittee discusses methods of addressing jurisdiction issues in domestic violence cases.
- Family Court continues to work on gun relinquishment project.

### New Public Awareness/Education Committee

Co-Chairs: Senator Liane Sorenson, Geri Lewis-Loper, and Cynthia Boehmer

### Immigration

Co-Chairs: Mary Davis and Maria Picazo

- Immigration Resource brochure is completed.
- Cultural competency training provided to Family Court and Headstart in 2004-2005.
- Sussex County section continues to work very closely with the DELTA Project.

### Law Enforcement

Co-Chairs: Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, David B. Mitchell, Chief Jeffrey Horvath, and Senator Liane Sorenson

- Police officers and prosecutors attend VAWA-funded domestic violence training conducted by American Prosecutors Research Institute in December 2004.
- Police officers attend VAWA-funded domestic violence training in February 2005/probation managers May 2005
- Police dispatchers received training in June 2005.

### Legislative

Co-Chairs: Senator Patricia M. Blevins and Attorney General M. Jane Brady.

- Subcommittee develops resolution creating a task force to consider the feasibility of a Family Justice Center in Delaware. That resolution (Senate Concurrent Resolution #7) was passed by the General Assembly in April 2005
- Subcommittee reviews Protection From Abuse legislation for possible expansion of eligibility requirements but decides not to proceed because of resource issues.
- Considers immunity for sexual assault volunteers and Visitation Center workers but decides not to proceed with legislation.
- Subcommittee considers payment and regulation issues with the Violent Crimes Compensation Board.

### Medical

Co-Chairs: Dr. Matthew Hoffman and Vincent J. Poppiti, Esq.

- Subcommittee continues to offer training, sponsoring events at Christiana Care, Dover Air Force Base, Henrietta Johnson Medical Center, public health nurses, and Emily P. Bissell Hospital.
- Subcommittee continues to review and revise the Medical Manual.
- Group continues to expand membership including the chiropractic profession and care for the elderly.

## VAWA HIGHLIGHTS

### **VAWA Implementation Committee Proposals**

Throughout this quarter, January through March 2005, the VAWA Implementation Committee submitted four grant proposals to the Office on Violence Against Women under the following grant programs: S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act Formula Grant Program, Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Protection from Abuse Orders, Transitional Housing Assistance, and Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange programs.

### **S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act Formula Grant Program**

In February 2005, the VAWA Implementation Committee submitted an application to the Office on Violence Against Women seeking continued support to sustain comprehensive programs in the State of Delaware, which addresses the needs of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. In March 2005, the VAWA Implementation Committee was notified that Delaware received an award amount of \$838,000, which resulted in a \$5,000 increase from FY2004 funding. It is anticipated that during the upcoming quarters funding allocations will be determined for FY2005.

### **Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Protection from Abuse Orders**

In January 2005, the VAWA Implementation Committee submitted a continuation grant proposal to supplement funding to create and implement a statewide integrated computerized domestic violence compliance system consisting of governmental agencies such as law enforcement, Probation and Parole, prosecutors, and courts; with non-profit, nongovernmental agencies such as batterer intervention programs and court-based victim advocacy centers to enforce the compliance of court orders to hold "offenders" and "systems" accountable. Additionally, this grant proposal sought new funding to 1) improve the tracking of cases involving domestic violence through the creation and implementation of a new non-criminal domestic violence incident report, and 2) provide technical assistance regarding the enforcement of protection orders, including interstate enforcement between states and tribal jurisdictions by initiating a statewide Full Faith and Credit Conference. In total, the grant proposal seeks funding in the amount of \$507,701.00.

### **Transitional Housing Assistance Program**

In February 2005, the VAWA Implementation Committee responded to the Office on Violence Against Women's solicitation, under the Transitional Housing Assistance Program, seeking applicants to develop grant proposals that addressed a holistic approach to assisting individuals with obtaining permanent housing, through the submission of a grant application in the amount of \$175,000. As a result, the CJC in collaboration with Abriendo Puertas, Child, Inc., and People's Place II, Inc. propose to establish and implement a statewide Transitional Housing Assistance Services fund. The goal of this project will be to provide shelter residents an opportunity to access transitional housing programs to assist with integrating them back into the community.

### **Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Programs**

In March 2005, the VAWA Implementation Committee submitted a grant proposal under the Office on Violence Against Women, in the amount of \$658,001.75, to expand, enhance and improve the existing services of the Family Visitation Centers in Delaware.

Specifically the CJC is partnering with the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of State Service Centers, to strategically establish two new supervised visitation and exchange centers to meet the needs of underserved and unserved families in western Sussex County and southern New Castle County. Additionally, this grant proposal seeks to increase the services provided at the New Castle County family visitation centers by instituting a therapeutic visitation services component.

**For more information or detail regarding applications, please refer to the DVCC website: [www.dvcc.state.de.us](http://www.dvcc.state.de.us) under VAWA Information.**

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#### **Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Members:**

Chair: Honorable Patricia M. Blevins, DE State Senator  
Vice Chair: Honorable Chandlee Johnson Kuhn, Chief Judge, DE Family Court  
Cynthia M. Boehmer, Program Director, Families in Transition  
Honorable M. Jane Brady, DE Attorney General  
Mary Davis, Chair, Domestic Violence Task Force  
Honorable Cari DeSantis, Secretary, Dept. of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families  
Dr. Matthew Hoffman, Board of Medical Practice Representative  
Chief Jeffrey Horvath, Dover Police Department  
Honorable Deborah Hudson, DE House of Representatives  
Geraldine Lewis-Loper, Director, Elderly Victim Services Program, DE Center for Justice  
Honorable David B. Mitchell, Secretary, Department of Safety and Homeland Security  
Maria Picazo, Executive Director, Abriendo Puertas  
Vincent J. Poppiti, Esq., Blank Rome LLP  
Honorable Liane Sorenson, Commission on Family Law Representative  
Honorable Lawrence M. Sullivan, DE Public Defender  
Honorable Stanley W. Taylor, Commissioner, Department of Correction  
Honorable James T. Vaughn, Jr., President Judge, Superior Court

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*Contributions to this issue provided by DVCC staff, Diane Glenn, Debbie Reed, Judge Coonin  
Photography: Eileen Ondra*